
Cassidy Ritter

Staff Writer
Kansas City
Business
Journal



SPONSOR CONTENT

Creative email call-to-action ideas that really drive action

BIZSPACE SPOTLIGHT

SPONSOR LISTING

Property Spotlight:
82 Corporate Woods®

[See All Bizspace Properti](#)

What started with a collection of 50 cities quickly dwindled to four cities competing for the title of best overall social media presence – two of which are from the Kansas City metro area.

The first "Trending Now!" award, hosted by Engaging Local Government Leaders (ELGL), is a national social media competition to determine which local government has the best overall social media presence.



The first annual "Trending Now!" award, hosted by Engaging Local Government Leaders, is a... more

[QUKA / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM](#)

After about a month of crowd voting, the Kansas City and Lenexa are two of the final competitors. They are up against Las Vegas and Hamilton, Ohio.

"Through some miracle, we were able to keep up with some of the bigger cities and able to motivate our residents and employees to vote for us," Lenexa Communications Specialist

[Kristen Waggener](#) said.

To qualify for the award, cities were nominated by residents and asked to describe how local governments use social media accounts to communicate.

Once nominations were received, ELGL member [Liz Aberg](#) put together a list of the top 50 cities nominated and opened up voting to narrow the group to 14 cities. Crowd voting also was used last week to lower the group from 14 cities to the final four, said [Mark Van Baale](#), social media manager for Kansas City.

"(Aberg) reached out to us and just asked about how we were using social media and our digital personality," Van Baale said.

The winning city will receive a "Trending Now!" trophy, registration to an ELGL conference, lifetime membership to ELGL, an opportunity to highlight the social media strategy during a podcast and webinar, and bragging rights, according to the ELGL website.

Van Baale said that being among the final four shows that Kansas City is on top of engagement with residents.

"Social media is another channel that we're communicating with people about information and showing that we're listening and we care about what people's thoughts are on social, and

we're willing to listen to that and reach out and interact with them," he said. "A lot of people in today's day and age are using social to ask questions and get answers. It's just another way for us to show that we have a strong presence out there on social media."

If the Lenexa wins, Waggener said it would be a big accomplishment for a smaller city, with about 50,000 residents.

"I know we are up against some pretty big cities there, and it's going to be a big feat for us to be able to win, but I think that would just be a testament to the fact that our residents and our employees really believe in us and believe that we do a great job," she said.

If Kansas City wins, "it definitely would show that we are one of the top social media accounts out there with the city," Van Baale said.

"(Also) I think that it will show that people can count on us, that we're willing to listen, and this is another means for us to interact with residents," he said. "So I think it will just raise the visibility of the city's social media accounts that you can reach out to and have your questions answered."

Final voting for the "Trending Now!" award will open July 5 and run until July 8, according to the website.

"I think it's really cool that there are two cities in the KC metro out of the top four in the entire country," Waggener said. "I think that really speaks a lot to the commitment that a lot of the cities and governments in the Kansas City area have to serving the residents."

Cassidy is an intern. She graduated in May from the University of Kansas' School of Journalism.